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# Training Program Performance 1999

*An Evaluation  
Of Alaska's  
Workforce  
Training  
System*

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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Alaska Human Resource Investment Council  
Department of Labor and Workforce Development



# The Alaska Human Resource Investment Council

## ***Vision***

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Building connections that put Alaskans into good jobs.

## ***Mission***

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The Alaska Human Resource Investment Council's purpose is to facilitate the process necessary to create and maintain an efficient, effective, and integrated human resource investment system. This comprehensive system will provide employment education and training services to assure Alaska employers have a skilled workforce and Alaska workers have employment choices.

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# Executive Summary

## Introduction

This is the third annual outcome evaluation of Alaska's workforce training system, as required by AS 23.15.580. It analyzes the results of twelve of the state's workforce training and education programs under AS 23.15.580(f).

The purpose of the evaluation is to report the results of workforce training, and recommend areas for improvement, which can be found in Figure 6 of this executive summary. The report discusses the results of the programs in terms of the four goals for the state training system established by the Alaska Human Resource Investment Council (AHRIC).

1. **Evaluation and Assessment:** Evaluate each program under AHRIC's oversight to optimize participant employability.
2. **Employment and Placement:** Ensure access to quality job training and employment services statewide, particularly to rural areas and for economically disadvantaged citizens.
3. **Workforce Readiness:** Strengthen the involvement of business and industry in developing Alaska's workforce.
4. **Policy and Planning:** Advocate for Alaska's human resource investment programs and promote continuous improvement through evaluation, access, quality and employer involvement.

The programs discussed in this report will be evaluated according to three of five

standards adopted by the AHRIC, with regards to the following:

1. **Employment:** The percent of former participants who have a job one year after leaving the training program;
2. **Earnings:** The median wage of former participants seven to 12 months after leaving the program;
3. **Training Relevance:** The percent of former participants who were employed after leaving the training program who received training under the program that was related to their jobs or somewhat related to their jobs seven to 12 months after leaving the training program;

AS 23.15.580 also requires the AHRIC to report on program performance based on customer satisfaction, for which data is currently unavailable. The AHRIC has adopted program performance standards for customer satisfaction, and will begin reporting in subsequent years with the regards to the following:

4. **Participant Satisfaction:** The percent of former participants of a training program who indicate that they were satisfied with or somewhat satisfied with the overall quality of the training program;
5. **Employer Satisfaction:** The percent of employers who indicate that they were satisfied with the quality of the work of new employees who had recently completed the training program.

The Alaska Department of Labor & Workforce Development, Research & Analysis Section performed the research for this report. Agencies provided program participant social security numbers, training start date, training completion or exit date, and other participant demographic information including the type of training provided when available.

Participant records were matched with historical unemployment insurance wage records, FY 97 and FY 98 program participant data. Alaska UI wage records include information on wage and salary workers in the private sector, state and local government.

Work history, quarters worked, earnings (total, average and median) before and after completion of training were calculated for each program participant with a social security number relative to the actual start or termination date for each participant.

It is important to note that **participant data presented in this report is for all exiting participants, not just those who completed programs**. Participants are defined as individuals who entered a program and demonstrated the intent to complete a sequence of program activities. The results are, therefore, affected by the number of participants who left their program before completion. Readers are also cautioned to consider that participants may have entered more than one program, which will cause some duplication.

## Program and Participant Characteristics

Figure 1 briefly describes the 12 programs included in this report.

The training programs are grouped into three clusters based on participant characteristics:

1. Adult Training Programs.
2. Programs Serving Adults with Barriers to Employment.
3. Programs Serving Youth.

Throughout this report, results are grouped in these three clusters.

It is very important to consider the demographic characteristics of program participants. The single most important factor in determining program results is the characteristics of the individuals who entered the program. Programs serving participants who have significant work experience and basic skills can be expected to have higher labor market outcomes than those serving participants with little work experience and low levels of literacy.

Readers should also consider that employment and earnings criteria are difficult to apply to programs for youth, since a majority of youth performance criteria do not emphasize employment based outcomes. This is especially true for "younger youth" population (14-18 year olds) which represents over 90% of all youth enrolled. The performance goals for this population include various educational skill attainments and are not employment based. In other words, for the vast majority of youth enrollees, employment related criteria are not applicable

## Programs Included in Training Program Performance—1999

FIGURE 1

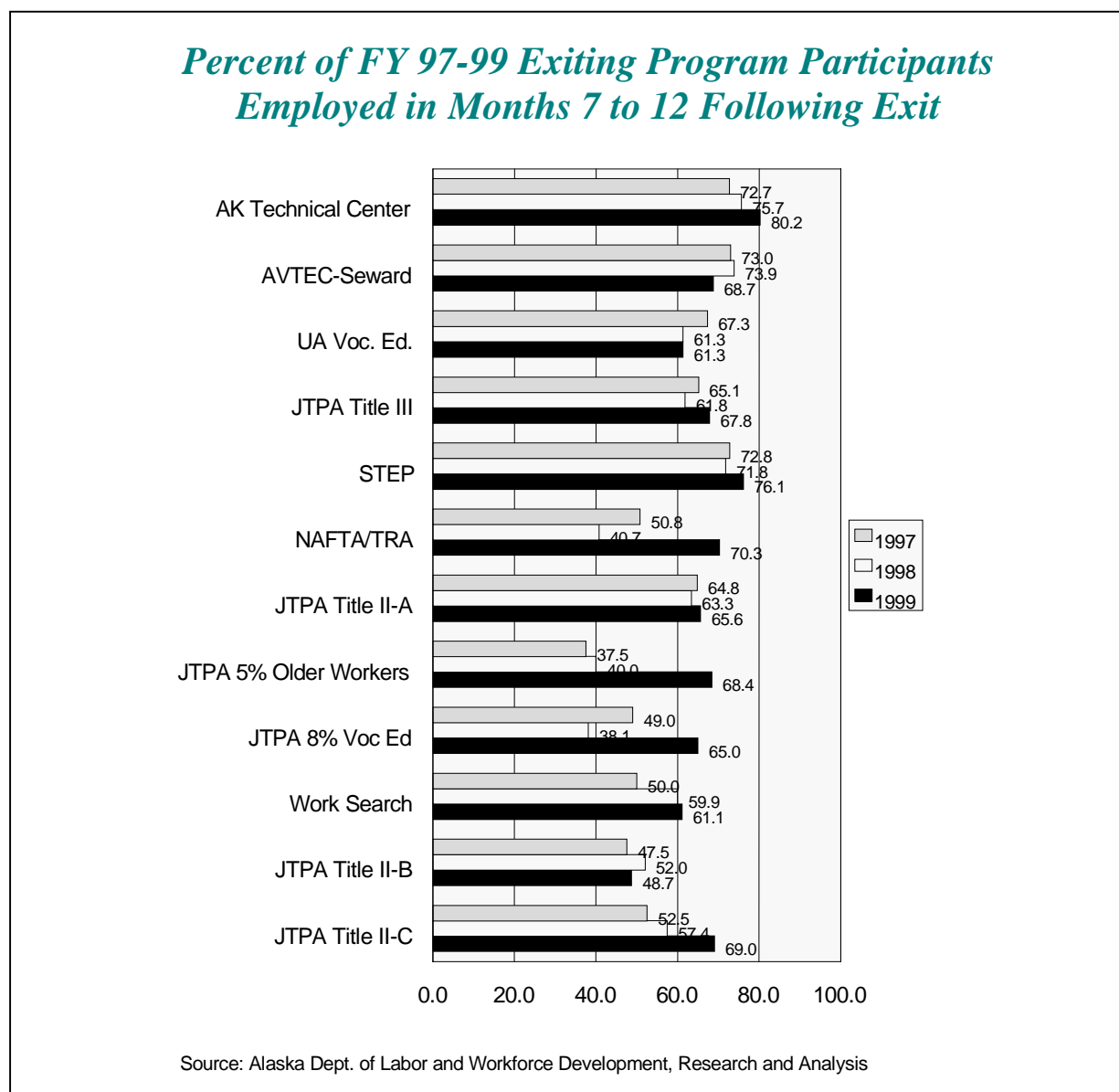
ADULT TRAINING	ALASKA TECHNICAL CENTER	<b>Adult Vocational Education.</b> Designed to meet the vocational and technical training needs of rural Alaskans, it has four core areas: office occupations, building industrial technology, industrial mine maintenance, and health occupations. Also provides Adult Basic Education, GED programs and a wide variety of short-term training.
	ALASKA VOCATIONAL TECHNICAL CENTER	<b>Technical and related training in Seward to students from throughout Alaska.</b> Provides market driven education in response to the needs of Alaska's business and industry, in career areas such as allied health, business & office technology, applied technology, food service technology, learning resources, physical plant technology and marine & fisheries.
	UA VOCATIONAL EDUCATION	<b>Adult vocational training at University campuses throughout Alaska.</b>
	JOB TRAINING PARTNERSHIP ACT TITLE III	<b>Provides employment and training assistance for dislocated workers.</b> Services available include career counseling, testing, job placement, occupational training, relocation assistance and other services.
	STATE TRAINING & EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM	<b>Funded by a percentage of employee contributions to the Alaska unemployment insurance trust fund,</b> provides training and/or reemployment assistance to unemployed or under-employed workers who have contributed to the fund. By reducing the length of time that workers are unemployed, the program is designed to reduce the amount of unemployment insurance benefits that are paid.
ADULTS W/ BARRIERS	NAFTA/TAA	<b>Federal entitlement program</b> which offers help to workers who lose their jobs or whose hours of work and wages are reduced as a result of increased imports from Canada or Mexico.
	JOB TRAINING PARTNERSHIP ACT TITLE II-A	<b>Adult Program supports training and services for low-income adults who face multiple barriers to employment.</b> Program services include an assessment of needs and abilities and services such as classroom training, on-the-job training, job-search assistance, work experience, counseling, basic skills training and support services.
	JTPA TITLE IIA OLDER WORKER PROGRAM	<b>Provides outreach, recruitment, training and support for low-income workers over age 55 interested in employment.</b> Senior Employment Counselors recruit eligible clients, provide assessment and counsel them on appropriate employment choices.
	JTPA TITLE II 8% VOCATIONAL EDUCATION	<b>Vocational Education Program</b> supports low-income youth and adults through school-to-work transition services, literacy and lifelong learning opportunities, and provides funding to train, place, and retain women in nontraditional employment.
	WORK SEARCH	<b>Four-week program intended to help Temporary Assistance (ATAP) clients</b> in their efforts to obtain and keep a job. Work Search attempts to move clients into the workforce as quickly as possible. All Temporary Assistance clients who are not exempt from participating in work activities are required to attend Work Search.
YOUTH	JOB TRAINING PARTNERSHIP ACT TITLE II-B	<b>Summer youth employment and training program</b> designed to improve basic education skills, encourage school completion, provide exposure to work, and enhance citizenship skills. The targeted population is low-income youth age 14 to 21.
	JOB TRAINING PARTNERSHIP ACT TITLE II-C	<b>Year-round youth program provides training and employment programs for both in-school and out-of-school youth.</b> Services may include adult services, limited internships in the private sector, school-to-work transition services and alternative high school services. The targeted population is low-income youth age 16 to 21.

The standards for program performance adopted by the AHRIC are based on three years of data for all of the twelve programs, and a benchmark level of performance across all programs. In the coming year, the AHRIC will work with each individual program to negotiate their individual performance standards, using the aggregate performance level as a benchmark. The goal

is to improve the level of performance for each program, in order to achieve improvement across the system.

The first measurement of training program success is whether participants gained employment as a result of their training. (See Figure 2.)

**FIGURE 2**



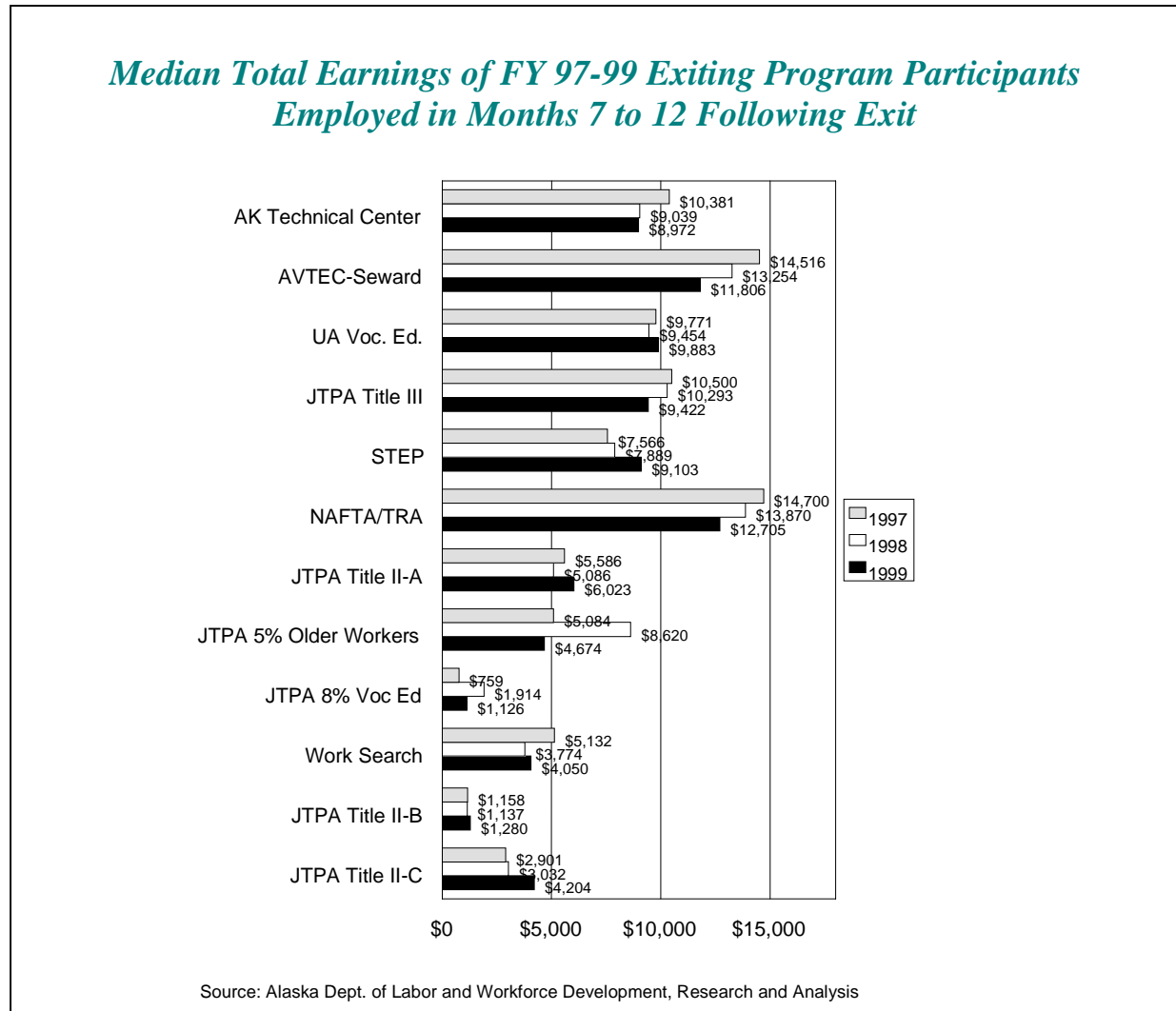
In general these programs either maintained or improved their performance. In a few

examples program performance declined slightly. However, this decline does not

significantly impact the overall workforce investment system. Patterns of continued decline should be reviewed with specific programs to identify recommendations for possible improvement.

The reader should note that six of the programs under assessment are JTPA programs that no longer operate as a result of passage and implementation of the Workforce Investment Act. Nonetheless the data is useful

FIGURE 3



in establishing expected performance for related programs of the Workforce Investment Act.

Overall data indicates that participants in the assessed programs have a better than 65% likelihood of being employed 7 to 12 months after competing training. The Council is

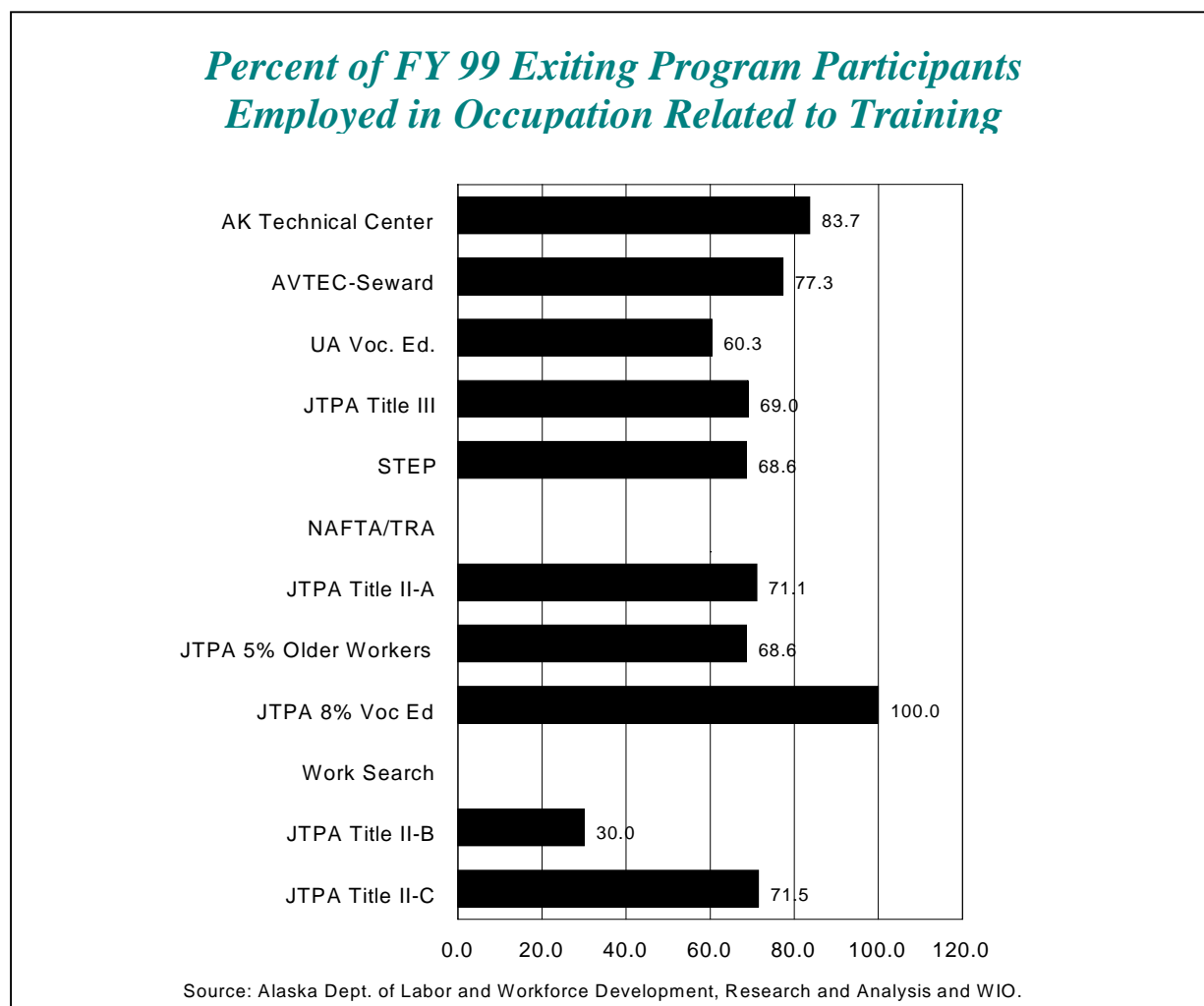
anxious to see improvement in this performance area and would expect the slow but steady growth in the labor market to result in gradual improvement in this indicator.

The second measure of success for training programs is the level of participants' earnings after training. (See Figure 3)

Readers should note in Figure 3 the impact of age and barriers to employment on the earning success of workforce system participants. In general, the youth worker and older worker earn approximately 25% less than the adult worker. Furthermore, participants enrolled in vocational programs are much more likely to earn significantly more than the adult with barriers. Most programs in Figure 3 have experienced moderate decline in earnings over the past

three years. Despite slow but steady state economic growth, participant income has tended to decline. This decline can be attributed to the dual effect of job loss in some high wage, high skill sectors and job creation in the low wage service sector. Given the economic factors in Alaska it is imperative that Alaska support economic development that creates high demand, high wage industries.

**FIGURE 4**



The third measure of success for training programs is whether participants gained employment in jobs related to the training they received. Data related to this measurement was not available for most programs until the 1999 program year, and

is now only available for a few programs. Percentage of workers employed in an occupation related to their course of study is available for Alaska Technical Center, AVTEC, the University of Alaska, STEP and some JTPA Programs. (See Figure 4)



Furthermore, programs have inconsistently collected data. As an example, in Figure 4 the JTPA 8% Voc Ed data was based on a total of four participants. As a result this data can not be used as a reliable prediction of future performance. In the future, programs must collect more data on training relatedness. In addition, data collected on programs for younger youth, age 14-18, does not demonstrate a high relationship between training and employment outcomes. This is due to the broad range of acceptable outcomes aside from employment.

Since the data is incomplete and not available for the three-year benchmarking period, it is unreasonable to make programmatic or systemic recommendations. In an effort to provide guidance to the programs, the Council establishes a standard of fifty percent for next year.

The fourth and fifth measurements of program success are related to customer

satisfaction. As mentioned previously, data related to customer satisfaction is not currently available. The Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA), which took effect July 1, 2000, requires programs receiving federal funds to report on performance, including customer satisfaction. In addition, the AHRIC will require programs not under WIA to report on customer satisfaction, so subsequent program evaluation reports will include this information.

Since *Program Performance Report – FY 99* includes three years' data, it shows a pattern of performance, from which the AHRIC has based the proposed standards in Figure 5. The standards are intended to be a starting point for each of the three categories of programs. Each individual program will have a different level of performance, which may be lower or higher than the average, as shown in Figures 2 through 4. Subsequent program performance reports will assess programs based on the standards in Figure 5.

FIGURE 5

Proposed Program Performance Standards			
Criteria	Adult Programs	Adults w/ Barriers	Youth Programs
Employment <sup>1</sup>	65%	60%	50%
Earnings <sup>2</sup>	\$4,500	\$3,500	\$2,000
Training Relevance <sup>3</sup>	50%	50%	50%
Participant Satisfaction <sup>4</sup>	65%	65%	65%
Employer Satisfaction	60%	60%	60%

<sup>1</sup> Post training employment information based on three years data from R&A, FY97-FY99. The proposed standard is a rough estimate based on this information.

<sup>2</sup> Post training earnings information based on three years data from R&A. The proposed standard is a rough estimate based on this information.

<sup>3</sup> Training relevance information is only available at this time for AK Tech, AVTEC, UA, STEP and some JTPA programs. In 1996 the AHRIC established a performance measure for STEP related to training relevance, with a goal of 50%, which was substantially exceeded. The AHRIC is proposing the 50% STEP standard as a starting point for all programs.

<sup>4</sup> Customer satisfaction is currently not reported, so is not included in this report. Under WIA and SB 334, programs will be reporting customer satisfaction. The proposed standards related to customer satisfaction are based on levels negotiated for WIA programs in Alaska's Unified Plan.

## Alaska Economic Overview

### *Slow and Steady Growth*

Employment growth in Alaska is expected to increase at an annual rate of 1.6% over the next ten years, resulting in 46,000 new jobs from 1998 through 2008(excluding gas pipeline planning or construction). This rate of growth is well below the annual Alaska employment growth rate of 2.5% experienced from 1988 to 1998.

Employment growth will be focused primarily in the services, trade and transportation industry sectors. The aging of Alaska's population, the growth of tourism, and the state's advantageous geographic location are important factors contributing to the projected job growth.

Given these growth areas the relative mix of overall occupational categories in Alaska's economy is not expected to significantly change. Administrative support occupations will continue to be the largest category of occupations in the state. The administrative support category of occupations includes such jobs as receptionist, clerk and teachers aide.

The fastest growing occupational category is forecast to be technicians. This category includes occupations such as respiratory therapists, computer programmers, and aircraft pilots. This group of occupations is projected to grow from a base of 12,400 in 1998 to 16,000 in 2008, an increase of 29.1%. The next fastest growing group of occupations is the professional specialty category, which includes jobs like registered nurse, teacher, and computer systems analyst. This group of occupations is projected to grow by 20.8%. With projected employment of 53,500 the professional specialty category of occupations is also the third largest in the state.

Of the 341,100 jobs projected by 2008 just under 20% or about 63,900 are in occupations with higher than median earnings and a growth trend that is better than the economy as a whole. These include general, financial, and administrative managers; aircraft pilots; computer systems analysts; dental hygienists; social workers; registered nurses; air traffic controllers; and drivers of heavy trucks. Two-thirds of these jobs will require at least some form of postsecondary education, with the largest portion requiring a college bachelors degree or better.

### *New Hires*

Employment turnover is a significant factor when assessing job opportunities in an economy. In 1999, (the last complete year of employment data available), there were an average of 273,700 wage and salary jobs in Alaska. In that same year there were over 250,000 'new hire' events. That is to say, a new worker is hired that had not worked for that employer at any time during the previous four quarters. Each one of these events is a job opportunity realized. In 1999, the occupation with the largest number of new hire events was 'cannery worker'. In over 12,000 cases the person hired had not worked for that firm in the past year. General office occupations and non-classified manual occupations followed with 9,800 and 9,100 'new hire' events. Though these occupations are the most commonly available job opportunities, turnover creates job opportunities in all occupations.

### *Nonresident Workers Decline, But Still Represent a Job Opportunity*

The number and percent of workers in Alaska that are nonresident has fallen to its lowest level in over ten years, with about 18

percent of all workers employed at some time during the year estimated to be nonresident in 1999.

The number of nonresident workers hired in Alaska each year provides an indication of unmet training needs in the state. In 1999, Alaska continued to show significant improvement in resident hire. Alaska employed more resident workers and reduced the relative share of nonresident workers in the Alaska economy. Nearly 82 percent of all workers employed in Alaska in 1999 were residents, the highest rate of resident worker employment recorded since 1988. A total of 64,828 nonresident wage and salary workers were employed in 1999. This was a 6.8% decline, or a decrease of 4,723 nonresident workers from the number employed in 1998.

The decline in nonresident workers is the result of the slow growth of the Alaska economy, the strong national economy and effective Alaska training programs that have provided skilled Alaska workers to fill Alaska jobs.

### *Alaska's Workers are Getting Older*

Alaska's workforce is aging. In 1999, over 91,400 workers in the state, local and private sectors were 45 years old or older. As we enter into the second half of this decade Alaska's older workers will start retiring in rapidly increasing numbers. These will be Alaska's most experienced workers. Many will have reached the peak of their careers and will be leaving senior positions. These vacancies at the top of the occupational ladder will create innumerable job opportunities through promotions and 'new hires', particular in the public sector that has a much higher average age and a large number of workers eligible to retire at a relatively young age.

Private sector industries with the largest number of workers age 50 and over include health services, oil and gas extraction, membership organizations, engineering firms, eating and drinking places, social services and air transportation. In 1999 the health services industry, which includes medical services and hospitals, had more than 3,100 workers age 50 and over.

Large industries with the highest percent of workers age 50 and over include pipelines, chemicals, educational services, electrical utilities, lumber and wood products, communications, oil and gas extraction and heavy construction. For industries with more than 100 total workers, pipelines had the oldest average age, with the average worker about 47 years of age in 1999. Many of these industries will need to replace workers with skills that can only be acquired through extensive training or education.

Occupations with the largest number of workers age 50 and over include general office occupations, janitors, elementary school teachers, sales clerks, general managers, bookkeepers, secretaries and registered nurses. Five of the top 20 occupational categories with the largest number of workers age 50 and over are teaching related occupations.

### *Job Opportunities Primarily in Urban Alaska*

Where will all these job opportunities occur? Over the past 20 years 85% of Alaska's job growth occurred in its urban centers. For the foreseeable future, this trend is not expected to change. With the possible exception of unique opportunities for natural resource development, most new jobs in Alaska will continue to be created in areas that have a

developed infrastructure capable of supporting economic growth.

But rural Alaska will continue to grow, but at a slower pace than urban Alaska. Since 1980 wage and salary employment in rural Alaska has grown at an annual rate of 2.0%. This doesn't match the urban growth rate of 2.6%, but it still represents a 46% increase, or 15,300 jobs. The top ten occupations in rural Alaska ranked by the number of persons they employed in 1999 are: cannery worker, elementary school teacher, teacher aide, janitor, construction laborer, electrician, manual work occupations, office clerk, and carpenter. Though these are the most numerous, there are over 475 different occupations represented in rural Alaska.

### *Summary*

Many data elements can help to determine employment opportunities and anticipated training need. Overall economic growth, occupational turnover, the number of nonresident workers, demographic trends, unemployment rates and Alaska's relative wage all play a role in determining where there are training gaps.

Despite slow economic growth, there are significant employment opportunities for Alaskans. And despite historically low unemployment rates, Alaska's unemployment is still higher than the national average and there are a significant number of underemployed and discouraged workers in Alaska. Alaska's per capita personal income and average earnings are currently hovering at the national average, providing little incentive for workers from high wage areas in western states to choose jobs in Alaska based strictly on economics. Training Alaska workers may be the best and least expensive solution for many employers. The oil industry, health care

industry and construction industry have begun to develop new training programs with training providers to provide skilled workers to meet anticipated hiring needs.

**Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis**

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## **Council Efforts**

### *Evaluation and Assessment*

***Goal:** Evaluate each program under AHRIC's oversight to optimize participant employability.*

The AHRIC Evaluation & Assessment Committee and the Department of Labor and Workforce Development have been working to improve this annual evaluation report and meet the requirements for program reporting established by the legislature. As mentioned previously, the law requires state and federally funded training programs to create performance measures and report on program outcomes. AHRIC's Evaluation and Assessment Committee and the Department of Labor and Workforce Development have produced two evaluation reports on *Employment and Earnings of Participants in Selected Alaska Training Programs*, the first for program year 1997, and the second for program year 1998, with a comparison to performance in 1997. Both reports are available through the AHRIC and DOL offices.

The first evaluation report included recommendations for data collection and reporting to improve program evaluation, which have been implemented in subsequent reports. One of the recommendations now being implemented is that training providers report the type of training for all participants, in order to determine whether participants gained employment in the

subject they were trained. This information was previously available for some programs, but not all programs, so setting a system-wide performance standard proved to be difficult. Information based on this standard is not available for all programs.

### ***Employment and Placement***

***Goal:*** *Ensure access to quality job training and employment services statewide, particularly to rural areas and for economically disadvantaged citizens.*

Alaska's one-stop career center system is successfully providing services at the local level across the state at nine full service job centers and thirteen satellite centers. The federal grant for implementing one-stop career centers ended June 30, 2000, and administration of the system has been transferred to the DOL Division of Employment Security and the two Local Workforce Investment Boards. The AHRIC has remained involved to continuously improve program outcomes and customer service for employers and job seekers through the one-stop system.

The Denali Commission, a federal/state commission whose mission is to improve infrastructure, education, training and employment in rural Alaska, has been a helpful partner in improving statewide services. The Department of Labor received a \$2 million Denali Commission grant which has helped provide training opportunities for rural Alaska residents on infrastructure projects in their region.

The Employment and Placement Committee and the Workforce Readiness Committee have identified common areas in their committee goals, and have met jointly for some time to work toward common goals. The committees have spent a considerable

amount of time working toward implementation of nationally recognized, industry based skill standards and occupational certifications.

### ***Workforce Readiness***

***Goal:*** *Strengthen the involvement of business and industry in developing Alaska's workforce.*

The Workforce Readiness Committee provides oversight for training, education, and employment programs to ensure the programs are delivering education and training that is relevant to local market needs and the career goals of state residents. The committee has worked to build partnerships between employers and quality workforce training programs, and connect state public and private education systems with business, government and labor to ensure that state residents are learning skills pertinent to employer needs.

The six Business Learning Consortia in Alaska provide the best example of the AHRIC's efforts to create partnerships between employers and training programs. The AHRIC has helped to convene industry workforce development groups in the health industry, an industry group composed of oil, gas, mining and utility processing, the Transportation industry, Information Technology, Construction and Hospitality. The six industry groups have worked successfully with the University of Alaska and other training providers to customize training for their particular industry.

The Workforce Readiness Committee has joined with an ad hoc AHRIC committee on Education and a group of stakeholders in Vocational Education to draft a statewide plan for vocational and technical education. The plan, *Alaska's Future Workforce*



*Strategic Policies and Investment Blueprint*, is required by SB 289 (Chapter 132 SLA 00). The law states that the AHRIC must "facilitate the development of a statewide policy for a coordinated and effective technical and vocational education training system in this state and, to the extent authorized by state and federal law, plan and coordinate federal, state, and local efforts in technical and vocational education programs." The Blueprint will be forwarded to the 22<sup>nd</sup> Legislature in January 2001.

### ***Policy and Planning***

***Goal: Advocate for Alaska's human resource investment programs and promote continuous improvement through evaluation, access, quality and employer involvement.***

The Policy & Planning Committee worked with the Alaska Workforce Investment Office in DOL and an assistant attorney general to draft regulations for the state's training and employment programs, as required by SB 334 (Chapter 85 SLA 98) and SB 289 (Chapter 132 SLA 00). The draft regulations clarify legislation affecting the State Training and Employment Program, elucidate the technical and vocational education grants program in AHRIC, and define the program's administrative costs, application deadline and priorities for grant awards. The regulations also describe the responsibilities of the AHRIC's four standing committees and detail the administrative, program, performance and reporting responsibilities

of the state's workforce investment system. A public hearing to elicit comments was held on December 4, 2000. The 30-day public comment period ended on December 11, 2000. The committee forwarded the regulations to the Council at their December 12 business meeting.

The committee has also adopted a 5-year plan for the State Training and Employment Program (STEP), which outlines administrative and programmatic improvements to assist in meeting STEP goals. Among other improvements, the plan requires DOL to distribute funds to the Local Workforce Investment Area administrators (sub-grantees) in a more efficient and timely manner, improved services to individuals through grants that place participants in training for high-demand occupations, and requires local administrators to improve data collection and information distribution.

In accordance with the legislative intent of SB 289 (Chapter 132 SLA 00), the Policy and Planning Committee has worked with Michael Brustein, a noted expert on the Workforce Investment Act and the Carl Perkins Act, to make a recommendation on reorganization of the AHRIC. Several considerations must be made for the Council to remain in compliance with these federal Acts. A report with recommendations will be forwarded to the 22<sup>nd</sup> Legislature in January of 2001.

# Strengths and Recommendations

## Strengths and Recommendations for Alaska's Workforce Training System

Following are summary comments on general performance, with recommendations for improvement listed in Figure 6.

After three years of baseline data on several training programs across the state, several areas of strength stand out. The percentage of participants employed after training has increased significantly from last year to this year. On average programs improved their performance by five percent from FY 98 to FY 99. In other words participants completing an assessed training program were more likely to be employed seven to twelve months after training than in years past. While the average difference in earnings dropped slightly from last year, when adjusted for the Ketchikan Pulp Mill closure, it was still significantly above FY 97 earnings. As is expected programs serving participants with the least number of barriers to employment achieved the highest performance over the past three years. Programs serving adults with barriers and youth either maintained their performance from FY 98 to FY 99 or else experienced only modest improvements.

Across the workforce training system there are general opportunities for improvement that could be implemented by many of the training programs. **Given the expected slow growth in Alaska's economy, programs serving adults and adults with barriers should provide non-traditional and industry specific training opportunities to participants.** This training should result in nationally

competitive skills and credentials. Such training will result in fewer non-resident workers, improved wages for women and greater flexibility for participants in the national job market.

**Private and public post-secondary training programs should, where appropriate, align training opportunities with the secondary curriculum of the six career pathways.** Alaska is in its final year of funding for career pathways. If career pathways is to maintain a foothold in Alaska's workforce training system it is important that students see linkages with career pathways and future training opportunities. Post-secondary training programs are the bridges between secondary education and employment.

Training services across Alaska are insufficient to meet the needs for all Alaskans. While Alaska's urban areas enjoy adequate training resources; rural communities have little or no resources. **Training resources and strategies are needed to meet the needs of rural Alaska.** Adequate support services are necessary to ensure rural Alaskans can successfully participate in training. These resources include tools, equipment, transportation and childcare assistance as well as regional training opportunities based on local industry needs.

Under the Workforce Investment Act incumbent worker training is possible. Local Workforce Investment Boards, in partnership with industry and training programs should leverage training resources to upgrade workers who are stuck in low pay, low skill jobs with little or no opportunity to develop meaningful careers.

**Programs like the State Training and Employment Program should be used to enhance the incumbent worker-training tool of the Workforce Investment Act.**

Of the programs assessed, technical and vocational education training programs produced the highest placement and earnings rate. **With the gas pipeline a realistic possibility in Alaska's future it is important to fund and develop these training programs to nationally competitive standards.** Industry must become the primary customer of our enhanced technical and vocational education programs. Alaska's technical vocational education training programs must market value added training programs and services to industry that will allow it to compete in the global market.

A fundamental key to successful training participation is literacy. **Adult education and literacy programs must be provided and aligned with our training programs.** Literacy training does not usually lead directly to employment. However, it does usually lead to additional vocational training, credentialing and employment enhancement. **In addition to expanding our literacy programs we must promote and measure literacy programs' capacity to contribute to a potential employment outcome.**

Alaska's summer youth programs served over 2400 youth during the last three years. For rural youth this was often the only employment opportunity available. The Workforce Investment Act has amended the features of the youth program so that summer youth services must occur in conjunction with other youth services. The youth funds under Workforce Investment Act are insufficient to meet the needs of over 800 youth annually. **Additional funds**

**must be obligated to maintain the current levels of service.** Possible resources for these funds include general appropriation and TANF funds as a welfare deterrence program.

As noted earlier in this report, employment related criteria are not applicable to performance goals for youth-related programs. **Youth programs should not be required to report on performance related to employment-based outcome measures.**

Information on Adult Basic Education is not included in this report because DOL did not collect data for ABE prior to 2000. Since that process has begun, ABE information will be included in future reports. **ABE should only be required to report on standards 1 through 4, and not employer satisfaction. Participants are unlikely to report to new employers that they have recently completed literacy training.**

**Alaska Statute 23.15 should be updated to reflect the changes brought on by consolidation, reorganization and passage of the Workforce Investment Act.** Programs including School-to-Work, Alaska Career Information System, One-stop career centers and programs listed in section 23.15.580(g) of the statute should be deleted from the statute.

Finally, the Workforce Investment Act programs must provide incentive awards to local workforce investment boards for coordination. Joint activities of the local boards should promote workforce development and improve Alaska's training resources.

The recommendations discussed above are listed in Figure 6 on the following page.



FIGURE 6

<b>Recommendations for System Improvement</b>	
<b>1.</b>	<b>Given the expected slow growth in Alaska’s economy, programs serving adults and adults with barriers should provide non-traditional and industry specific training opportunities to participants.</b>
<b>2.</b>	<b>Private and public post-secondary training programs should, where appropriate, align training opportunities with the secondary curriculum of the six career pathways.</b>
<b>3.</b>	<b>Additional training resources and strategies are needed to meet the needs of rural Alaska.</b>
<b>4.</b>	<b>Programs like the State Training and Employment Program should be used to enhance the incumbent worker training tool of the Workforce Investment Act.</b>
<b>5.</b>	<b>With the gas pipeline a realistic possibility in Alaska’s future it is important to fund and develop technical and vocational education training programs to nationally competitive standards.</b>
<b>6.</b>	<b>Adult education and literacy programs must be provided and aligned with the state’s training programs.</b>
<b>7.</b>	<b>Expand employment-based outcomes for literacy programs.</b>
<b>8.</b>	<b>The youth funds under the Workforce Investment Act are insufficient to meet the needs of over 800 youth annually. Additional funds must be obligated to maintain the current levels of service.</b>
<b>9.</b>	<b>Youth programs should not be required to report on performance related to employment-based outcome measures.</b>
<b>10.</b>	<b>Adult Basic Education should only be required to report on standards 1 through 4, and not employer satisfaction.</b>
<b>11.</b>	<b>Alaska Statute 23.15 should be updated to reflect the changes brought on by consolidation, reorganization and passage of the Workforce Investment Act.</b>